

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for managing data rights comprising:
receiving a request for a permit to access a piece of protected content, said piece of protected content protected in accordance with a first data rights management architecture;
determining which one of a plurality of data rights management architectures corresponds to said first data rights management architecture;
generating a permit to access said piece of protected content based on said determined one of said plurality of data rights management architectures; and
providing said permit in response to said request whereby said permit grants access to said piece of protected content.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising processing a permit acquisition term associated with said piece of protected content prior to providing said permit.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said processing a permit acquisition term comprises retrieving said permit acquisition term based on said request.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein said processing a permit acquisition term comprises presenting a consumer with a query corresponding to said permit acquisition term.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein said processing a permit acquisition term comprises receiving a response to said query from said consumer.

6. The method of claim 2, wherein said processing a permit acquisition term comprises receiving payment information associated with a consumer.

7. The method of claim 2, wherein said processing a permit acquisition term comprises receiving demographic information from a consumer.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein said providing said permit comprises providing said permit to a consumer.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein said providing said permit comprises:
providing said permit to a sponsor; and
providing said permit from said sponsor to a consumer.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein said providing said permit to said consumer comprises allowing said consumer to retrieve said permit.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein said determining which one of a plurality of data rights management architectures corresponds to said first data rights management architectures comprises accessing a look-up table.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein said determining which one of a plurality of data rights management architectures corresponds to said first data rights management architectures comprises using information available in said request regarding said first data rights management architectures.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein said determining which one of a plurality of data rights management architectures corresponds to said first data rights management architecture comprises retrieving a permit class associated with said piece of protected content.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein said retrieving a permit class comprises retrieving said permit class from said request.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein said retrieving a permit class comprises retrieving said permit class from a database.

16. An agnostic data rights management clearing house comprising:
an order management system that receives a request to provide access rights to protected content; said protected content packaged in accordance with a first data rights management architecture;
a permit system interfaced to said order management system that determines which one of plurality of data rights management architectures corresponds to said first data rights management architecture, that generates a permit based on said determined one of said plurality of data rights management architectures, and that provides said permit in response to said request to provide access rights to protected content.

17. A permit system comprising:
means for determining which one of a plurality of data rights management architectures corresponds to a particular permit request;
means for generating a permit based on said determined one of a plurality of data rights management architectures; and
means for providing said permit in response to said request.

18. A method for managing data rights comprising the steps of:
receiving a request from a sponsor to access protected content, said protected content packaged in accordance with a first data rights management architecture;
determining which one of a plurality of data rights management architectures corresponds to said first data rights management architecture;
generating a permit to access said protected content based on said determined one of said plurality of data rights management architectures.

19. The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of providing said permit to a consumer in response to said request.

20. The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of providing said permit to said sponsor.

21. A method for managing data rights comprising the steps of:
determining which one of a plurality of permit classes was used to protect a piece of protected content; and
generating a request for a permit to access the piece of protected content, said request specifying said one of a plurality of permit classes.

22. A method protecting content comprising:
receiving a request from a packager for a first permit class to protect a piece of content, said first permit class associated with a first data rights management architecture;
generating said first permit class; and
transmitting said first permit class to said packager.

23. The method of claim 22, further comprising:
receiving a request from a packager for a providing a second permit class to protect a piece of content, said second permit class associated with a second data rights management architecture.

24. A method for generating permit classes comprising:
receiving a request from a sponsor for a first permit class, said first permit class associated with a first data rights management architecture;
transmitting said first permit class to said sponsor;
receiving a request for a second permit class, said second permit class associated with a second data rights management architecture; and
transmitting said second permit class to said sponsor.